

BOIL WATER NOTICE

To all users of the Sterling Water Department located in Sterling Massachusetts

This is an important notice - please translate it for anyone who does not understand English.

BOIL YOUR WATER BEFORE USING

Our water system routinely monitors for the presence of drinking water contaminants to ensure the safety of the water supply. On July 21, 2010 our water system was notified that a water sample collected on July 20, 2010 from the Worcester Road Well #2A tested positive for E.coli, which is a fecal indicator. Well #2A is one of 6 wells that supplies drinking water to our system. While we test more samples and evaluate the water system operation, we are advising our customers to **BOIL** the water to reduce any potential risk to bacterial or viral contamination.

What should you do?

- **DO NOT DRINK THE WATER WITHOUT BOILING IT FIRST.**

Bring all water to a rolling boil, let it **boil for one (1) minute**, and let it cool before using, or use bottled water. Boiled or bottled water should be used for drinking, making ice, brushing teeth, washing dishes, and food preparation **until further notice**. Boiling kills bacteria and other organisms in the water.

- Refer to the attached notice for additional precautions you may take. This information **is also** located on the MassDEP website:
Consumer Information on Boil Orders <http://www.mass.gov/dep/water/drinking/boilordr.htm>
Boil Order Frequently Asked Questions <http://www.mass.gov/dep/water/drinking/boilfaq.htm>
- **Discard** any ice, beverages, formula, and uncooked foods that were prepared with water from the public water system on or after July 20, 2010.
- **Food establishments** must follow MA DPH procedures and the direction of their local board of health, which may be more stringent than the DPH guide. **MA Department of Public Health - Guidance for Emergency Action Planning for Retail Food Establishments (pg. 19)** http://www.mass.gov/Eeohhs2/docs/dph/environmental/foodsafety/emergency_action_plans.pdf
- **Please share this information** with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (for example, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.

What does this mean?

E. coli is a fecal indicator and it was detected in the well water for your system. Because a fecal indicator was detected in your well water the USEPA requires us to provide you with this Notice and the following information on fecal indicators. *"Fecal indicators are microbes whose presence indicates that the water may be contaminated with human or animal wastes. Microbes in these wastes can cause diarrhea, cramps, nausea, headaches, or other symptoms. They may pose a special health risk for infants, young children, some of the elderly, and people with severely compromised immune systems."* Because these symptoms are not only caused by organisms in drinking water, if you experience any of these symptoms and they persist, or, if you have specific health concerns, consult your doctor. General guidelines on ways to lessen the risk of infection by microbes are available from the EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1-800-426-4791.

What is being done?

While we continue to evaluate the situation and wait for the results of sampling to determine when the risk of contamination is removed we are doing the following:

- Removed the affected Well #2A from service until the cause of the contamination can be identified and the safety of the source can be confirmed.
- Begun adding chlorine disinfectant to the water in the area of the distribution system served by the affected well. Chlorine and a slight discoloration may be detected in the water.

We are in contact with MassDEP who is evaluating the actions we are taking to ensure safe water is being delivered to you. We anticipate resolving the problem as soon as possible and will inform you when you no longer need to boil your water.

For more information

Contact: Sterling Water Department at 978-422-6767
PWSID#: 2282000 Date Distributed: July 21, 2010

Website: <http://www.sterling-ma.gov/>